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PSYCHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

Grundlinien der Psychologie, von DR. STEPHAN WITASEK. Mit 15 Figuren im Text. (Philosophische Bibliothek, Band 115.) Leipzig, Verlag der Dürr'schen Buchhandlung, 1908. pp. viii, 392. Mk. 3.00.

This little volume has a twofold claim to consideration: first, as a text-book for class instruction, written by one of the best known and most competent of the younger generation of psychologists, and secondly as a summary of the views held by that Austrian school of which Höfler and Meinong are the leaders. To the present reviewer, the latter claim appears definitely to outweigh the former. We do not doubt that the book could be used with success, in undergraduate work, by its author or by a teacher of like training; and we have nothing but admiration for many of its features—its resolute facing of difficulties, its solid packing of fact, its caution and suspension of judgment on various disputed points. But we find, on the other hand, a marked unevenness of style, ranging from the colloquial simplicity of the primer to argumentation on the highest technical level; we find that the ideal of complete exposition, praiseworthy in itself, has too often led to the dryness and heaviness of an encyclopædia article; and we find ourselves compelled, as the book proceeds, to master a highly articulated terminology, which is not applied in such detail or with such frequency as to become wholly familiar, and which must therefore tend to substitute, in the beginner's mind, a psychology of reflection for the psychology of observation. In these respects the book is distinctly inferior to Ebbinghaus's *Abriss*. It is mainly interesting, then, as a compendious statement of the current psychology of the Austrian school. Höfler's *Psychologie* and *Grundlehren der Psychologie* appeared as long ago as 1897; and although the general attitude of the school has remained unchanged, the progress of psychology during the last eleven years has naturally served to extend, modify, revise and clarify its fundamental ideas. In this work of systematization, the author of the *Grundlinien* has himself played an active part.

The book has two main divisions: a shorter, entitled General Psychology, which occupies 96 pp., and a longer, Special Psychology, which occupies 270 pp. Ch. i of the former division defines the province of the science. The subject-matter of psychology is the sum-total of mental facts; and the characteristic feature of anything 'mental' is that it points beyond itself to a 'physical.' "Unser Vorstellen ist so beschaffen, dass es uns *Dinge* zur Vorstellung bringt." "mein Denken erfasst Dinge, die selbst kein Denken, ja überhaupt nichts Geistiges sind. . . . Das Gleiche gilt vom Fühlen und vom Wollen." This 'pointing to' is the most obvious indication of that essential difference between the two realms of fact of which one can, in the last resort, say nothing more than: "Materielles hier und dort Geistiges." Its explanation is relegable to epistemology. So much on the positive side. On the negative, the author rejects both the older definitions of psychology as the 'science of mind' and the more recent definition which makes it the 'science of the subjective aspects (properties, attributes) of experience' (Mach, Ebbinghaus, Külpe).

Ch. ii discusses the theories of the relation between mind and body.

The author writes carefully and with reserve, though his leaning towards interactionism is sufficiently clear; psychophysical parallelism, we are told, must, if consistently carried out, lead to the acceptance of a 'substantielle Seele' (p. 40). But it might, on the writer's own principles, just as well lead to a non-substantial 'unconscious;' and its representatives deny emphatically that it leads them either to the one or to the other. The chapter as a whole, while it achieves a difficult task of condensed writing, is far above the level of a brief text-book and far too scrappy for a first-hand discussion.

Ch. iii deals with the concepts of mind, self or ego, and unconscious. From the psychological standpoint, there is no ground for the assumption of a 'substantial mind,' unless we adopt the principle of parallelism; in that case, we must have recourse to a mind-substance, which, however, is not simple but compound (*zusammengesetzt*). The further question of an 'ultimate' simple mind belongs to metaphysics. The psychological self or ego comprises the sum-total of the individual's 'actual' mental facts, and the sum-total of his *Dispositionsgrundlagen*, of the substrata of his mental dispositions. Mental dispositions are not 'unconscious' mental facts; they are, as such, simply faculties or capacities; the only 'real' things that belong to them are constituents of the organism that co-operate, as relatively permanent part-causes, in the realization of the mental activities of the individual. These 'constituents of the organism,' *Dispositionsgrundlagen*, are most naturally regarded by interactionism as physical (cerebral), while parallelism, as has been remarked, must look upon them as mental (manifestations of the mind-substance). 'Unconscious' mental facts are actual, but of such low intensity that they cannot be noticed (*bemerkt*); there is no need for any other interpretation of the term.

Ch. iv undertakes a preliminary classification of the subject matter of psychology. We have to distinguish: first, between the fundamental mental formations (*Gebilde*) and the mental processes (*Prozesse*). The formations fall into two great groups: the intellectual and the emotional. In the former class we find ideas and thoughts; in the latter, feelings and appetitions. But further: we must distinguish, in every fundamental formation, "zum mindesten in gewissem Sinne," between act and content. Thus there is a certain 'part' of the idea by virtue of which it brings a definite object to consciousness; this is its content. There is also a part in virtue of which we recognize it as idea, in contradistinction (say) to feeling, or in virtue of which we mark off idea of perception from idea of memory or of imagination; this is its act. Content and act are, in the idea, inseparable, and both alike are mental; they are thus both different from the 'object' of the idea, which is usually physical.

So far the author. And here the reviewer must interpose his objection to the separation of 'act' and 'content,' as at once unnecessary and confusing. Other psychological systems, as is well known, get on without any such dichotomy of the mental life; and it does not appear that Dr. Witasek gains by its introduction. He writes, as always, carefully; doubtless with especial care, in view of criticism past and to come. But his exposition, nevertheless, comes perilously near to self-contradiction. Every fundamental formation is ideally separable into act and content, "at least in a certain sense." In what sense? Turn to the special psychology of feeling, p. 318. Here feeling proper, *das Gefühlsmoment* in the affective complex, is all act; quality and intensity of feeling are quality and intensity of act, not of content; the content of feeling is not affective content at all, but ideational content. Or turn to the special psychology of thought, p. 280. Judgment divides ideally into act of judgment and content of

judgment. The act has two essential moments, conviction and affirmation-negation. The content of the judgment is not judgment-content, any more than the content of feeling is feeling-content; it is, again, ideational content. But there is a further complication. The 'contact' of ideational content with the affirmation-negation moment of the act brings into being a new quasi-content, the objective. This objective is not subject-matter for psychology; it is, however, psychologically useful as indicating the way in which the act of judgment approaches and connects with the (ideational) content of judgment; thus, we distinguish by its means between the thetic and the synthetic function of the act of judgment, the behavior of the act in the existential and categorical judgments of the logic text-books. For the rest, the conviction-moment of the act is capable only of intensive gradation; the moment of affirmation-negation is qualitative in character. Between the qualitative extremes lie qualitative transitional forms, the middle-most of which is a suspense of judgment (p. 285); it is, however, not clear to the reviewer whether these intermediate qualities belong purely to the moment of affirmation-negation or represent combinations of this with the moment of conviction (pp. 79, 283 f.). Further: certain judgments (not all) evince in the act of judgment a third moment or attribute, that of evidence. This may appear as evidence of (objective) certainty, correlated with affirmation or negation; or as evidence of (objective) probability, correlated with the qualitative transition forms of that moment; whether evidence itself is quantitatively or qualitatively graded is not expressly said, but the gradation would seem to be qualitative.

The underlying idea of all this classification may be simply expressed in the sentence: 'mental facts' point beyond themselves (1) in various ways (2) to different things. The ways come to consciousness as act, the things as content. But a first point of criticism, which at once suggests itself, is that the typical function of pointing-towards is exercised only by the idea; the idea is assumed to be the typical mental formation. At the beginning of the book, mental fact is defined by reference to idea, and the other varieties of mental formation are listed, so to say, as an appendix (pp. 6 f.). When the distinction of act and content is first drawn (pp. 73 ff.), we are left 'doubtful' whether the content of feeling, wish, etc., is directly or indirectly given; given, that is, as object-brought-to-consciousness by the pointing of feeling-act to object of feeling, or given secondarily, as object-already-brought-to-consciousness-by-act-of-idea. When we come to the special psychology of feeling and judgment, the doubt has disappeared; the content is ready-made ideational content, and the acts of feeling and of thought do not aim directly at objects at all. In other words, the original definition of 'mental fact' has, in the writer's own exposition and quite apart from any further question of its validity, been modified to meet the cases of feeling and judgment; or, to invert this statement, the treatment of feeling and judgment has been forced into the terms of a definition which is inadequate to them. A second point of criticism is suggested by the definition of act. The act of idea or judgment (p. 75) is that part or aspect of the formation which is directed towards the object; it is a 'relation' or a 'reference' in the idea of judgment. Now references may be qualitatively dissimilar; but can they differ intensively? Can there be more and less of a particular manner-of-pointing? If the reply is made that such a state of affairs, while logically impossible, is possible in psychology, then we are brought face to face with the real issue involved in the whole classification, the ultimate question of psychological fact. Does introspection compel us to separate act from content, whether in the idea or elsewhere?

And is Dr. Witasek photographing consciousness or imaginatively constructing it? Does he offer us *Beschreibung* or *Kundgabe*, *Erlebnis* or *Ausdruck*? In the reviewer's opinion, his act-and-content psychology is the artificial product of a wrong initial attitude: the attitude of one who is not content to regard mind as a datum for scientific description and explanation, but who reads his epistemology at every point into his psychology.

To return, however, to Ch. iv. The mental 'processes' come to consciousness as sequences, continuous or discrete, of fundamental mental formations. They may be classified, empirically, by reference to the act (of idea, of thought, of feeling, of appetite) with which they begin and end. Thus, if the process runs from idea to idea we have 'association;' with other first and last terms we have rumination, comparison, integration, attention, inference, vacillation, deliberation, resolution, etc., etc. It is, however, characteristic of all such processes that they are not adequately defined by reference to consciousness; their essentials lie outside consciousness, in the brain (interactionism) or in the unconscious depths of the substantial mind (parallelism). Further: since the mental formations themselves depend in part upon extra-conscious conditions, and since these conditions are most plausibly identified with the extra-conscious essentials of the mental processes, we may consider idea, thought, feeling and appetite, from the point of view of process, as ideation, thinking, being-affected, desiring. This reading of formation as process gives us a definite point of attack for our process-psychology; beginning with the formation process, we may gradually advance to a theory of the processes *sensu stricto*. In the meantime, we note that processes obviously divide into active and passive, and that the active tend (in course of practice) to lapse into passive; so that the same mental result may represent very different expenditures of mental force; or very different amounts of mental work.

Besides formations and processes, psychology has to take account of mental dispositions. These, as we have noted, are not themselves in any sense real things. They are *Kausalrelationsfälle*; they express the fact that the individual contains within him a part-cause of his mental processes and formations. The two principle problems of this division of psychology are, first, that of the number of fundamental dispositions (whether, *e. g.*, memory and imagination are, as dispositions, identical or different), and secondly that of dispositional change (practice, fatigue, etc.; change by acquisition of new dispositions).

Ch. v, the concluding chapter of the division of General Psychology, deals with the problem and method of psychology. As we find here nothing new or characteristic, we may pass directly to a few concluding remarks upon the division of Special Psychology. Here we have four chapters, named from the four fundamental formations, idea, thought, feeling and appetite; there are no special chapters devoted to the processes and dispositions. Of the 270 pp. which are assigned to the division, 182 fall to the lot of idea (sensation, 'produced' idea or *Gestaltqualität*, memory and association), 36 to thought, 34 to feeling, and 18 to appetite. The dominance of idea is natural, since experimental psychology has gathered a vast store of facts concerning sensation and memory; we have seen that it is also, from the author's standpoint, justifiable,—idea being the typical 'mental fact.' Thought, on the other hand, is somewhat shabbily treated. And when we note that attention receives hardly nine pages, while the *Annahme* gets five and a half, we are tempted to accept the challenge of the Preface, and to judge the book not only by what it contains, but also by what it omits. The final chapters, on feeling and appetite, are written with

the critical caution to which we have grown accustomed. Nevertheless, more might surely have been made of the appetition; and the average reader would probably be glad to exchange many pages of tentative articulation for a frank and clear statement of opinion.

This whole division makes, in fact, a mixed impression. The careful advance of the close-packed paragraphs is, in its way, admirable. Yet our intellectual palate is not satisfied; we want something more,—that solid and conclusive something, perhaps, which Dr. Witasek denies us, on grounds of general scientific validity, in the brief *Schlusswort*. But it may be that we should have been content with a couple of special chapters on the processes and the dispositions. The discussion of these topics is scattered here and there throughout the four chapters, and not even the unusually good index makes any attempt to round them up; under *psychische Prozesse*, e. g., there is no reference either to *Aufmerksamkeit* or to *Produktion der Vorstellungen*, under *Disposition* there is no reference to *Reproduktionsdisposition*. The result is that we have no unitary attempt at the solution of problems which the author emphasized as of high importance in ch. iv.

P. E. WINTER.

Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die experimentelle Pädagogik und ihre psychologische Grundlagen, von ERNST MEUMANN, 2 vols., Leipzig, Engelmann, 1907. pp. 555, 467.

The psycho-pedagogical movement, which dates back about two decades, and which is known in America as "child-study," has been crystallizing in Germany, within the last few years, into the systematic form characteristic of German scholarship, under the double name of Child-psychology, and Experimental Pedagogy. Experimental Pedagogy is child study on a higher plane of scientific development, or perhaps one should say, narrowed down into a more or less exact science, showing its distinctive feature in the application of the methods of experimental psychology to the problems of education and instruction. The investigations in the field had been casual and fragmentary, until the "Experimental Didactics" of Lay appeared in 1903, the first attempt to bring the results of various experimental studies together into a coherent form, and to build upon them a system of scientific pedagogy. Now we have a second work in a similar line, though of somewhat different character, in the "Introduction to Experimental Pedagogy and its Psychological Foundations," by Prof. Meumann.

The book consists of a series of lectures given originally before the Teachers' Union at Königsberg, revised and supplemented for the present publication. The author does not pretend to present a completed system of pedagogy nor even a comprehensive and exhaustive survey of all that has been done in the field of Experimental Pedagogy, but intends, rather, to show, in a popular and brief form, the methods employed in the experimental investigation of pedagogical and didactic problems with illustrations of some of the results already attained. In the course of his lectures, however, he steps out, quite naturally, from these limitations and often seems inclined to speak the final word upon practical questions.

His intellectualistic and formalistic standpoint sound the keynote of the whole book, as the voluntaristic and motoristic philosophy gave that of Lay's "Experimental Didactics." Meumann's work is, however, far less overtly philosophical and his own pedagogic views are much less explicitly asserted than those of Lay.

In the first chapter are discussed the character, problems, peculiar position, and methods of experimental pedagogy, which is defined as experimental investigation in the field of education, and aims at the